

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9809

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5209

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IN, PK, BG

SUBJ: INDO/ PAK NEGOTIATIONS: DATE FOR NEXT MEETING PROPOSED

SUMMARY: ACCORDING SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, JUNE 23
AZIZ AHMED LETTER TO SWARAN SINGH SUGGESTS INDO/ PAK MEETING
JULY 9 IN ISLAMABAD OR MURREE. SUGGESTION FOLLOWED INDIAN
CONCESSION IN JUNE 11 SWARAN SINGH LETTER OF DROPPING IN-
SISTENCE ON PAK " ACCEPTANCE" OF PRINCIPLES APRIL 17
DECLARATION AS PRECONDITION FOR MEETING. NO INDICATIONS PAKS WILL
HAVE ANY MAJOR NEW PROPOSALS FOR MEETING, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY
SUGGEST IMMEDIATE EXCHANGE OF ALL DETAINEES OTHER THAN THOSE
BEING HELD FOR TRIAL. GOP DISTURBED AT REPORTS INDIA HAS
TURNED OVER TO BANGLADESH NUMBER OF PAK POWS OF EAST
PAKISTANI ORIGIN. BHUTTO STILL PLANNING TO ASK NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY ON JUNE 29 FOR STANDBY AUTHORITY TO RECOGNIZE
BANGLADESH. END SUMMARY

1. POL COUNSELOR CALLED ON MFA DIREGEN FOR SOUTH ASIA,
ABDUL SATTAR, JUNE 27 TO INQUIRE ABOUT LATEST MOVES IN
INDO/ PAK NEGOTIATIONS.

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2. SATTAR CONFIRMED THAT GOP HAD PROPOSED EARLY INDO/ PAK MEETING IN AZIZ AHMED' S MOST RECENT LETTER TO SWARAN SINGH. AS HE EXPLAINED IT, SWARAN SINGH' S JUNE 11 LETTER (RECEIVED IN ISLAMABAD JUN 14) CONTAINED SIGNIFICANT INDIAN CONCESSION, MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR PAKS TO CALL FOR MEETING. BULK OF SWARAN SINGH LETTER, SATTAR SAID, CONSISTED OF DETAILED REBUTTAL OF POINTS RAISED IN THE TWO GOP AIDE- MEMOIRES INDIANS HAD ERRONEOUSLY RECEIVED THROUGH SWISS. IN COMMENTING ON EARLIER PAK PROPOSAL FOR MEETING WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS, HOWEVER, LETTER HAD POINTEDLY DROPPED INSISTENCE EXPRESSED IN EARLIER SWARAN SINGH LETTERS THAT GOP " ACCEPT" PRINCIPLES OF APRIL 17 DECLARATION AS PRELUDE TO TALKS, ASKING INSTEAD ONLY THAT GOP AGREE " DISCUSS" THESE PRINCIPLES.

3. AZIZ AHMED REPLIED TO SWARAN SINGH LETTER ON JUNE 23, SATTAR CONTINUED, INDICATING WILLINGNESS DISCUSS ALL PERTINENT ISSUES AND PROPOSING TWO SIDES MEET JULY 9 IN PAKISTAN, AT ISLAMABAD OR MURREE. PAKS MADE CLEAR IN LETTER THAT DATE WAS BY NO MEANS SACROSANCT AND THAT, IF INDIANS PREFER, MEETING COULD BE PUT OFF UNTIL BHUTTO' S RETURN FROM US IN LATE JULY.

4. IN RESPONSE POL COUNSELOR' S QUERY RE POSITIONS GOP MIGHT TAKE AT PROPOSED MEETING, SATTAR REVIEWED GOP STANCE ON KEY ISSUES -- POW RETURN, REPATRIATION OF BENGALEES, TRANSFER OF BIHARIS TO PAKISTAN -- ALONG FAMILIAR LINES. WITH REGARD WAR CRIMES TRIALS, HE ASSERTED IT WOULD BE " UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE" FOR GOP TO REFRAIN FROM PUTTING BENGALEES ON TRIAL SHOULD MUJIB PROCEED WITH HIS TRIALS. SATTAR STRONGLY REFUTED SUGGESTION THAT BDG WAS UNDER POPULAR PRESSURE TO HOLD TRIALS, CITING RECENT ARTICLES IN INDIAN PRESS TO EFFECT THERE NO PUBLIC DEMAND IN BANGLADESH FOR TRIALS.

5. ON BIHARIS, SATTAR REPEATED STANDARD GOP ARGUMENTS, BUT ADDED NEW TWIST: GOP, HE SAID, WOULD HAVE TO REJECT BDG DEMAND THAT IT ACCEPT ALL " NON- BENGALEES" WHO WISH MIGRATE TO PAKISTAN ON GROUNDS DEMAND IS " RACIST". WHILE GOP PREPARED TAKE IN LIMITED NUMBER OF FORMER
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EAST PAKISTANIS WHO HAD " SERVED PAKISTAN" OR HAD TIES WITH WEST, PAKS WOULD NOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN BENGALEES AND NON- BENGALEES IN THIS REGARD.

6. SATTAR THEN SAID GOP WAS DEEPLY DISTURBED AT BENGALEE PRESS REPORTS INDICATING THAT GOI HAD ALREADY TURNED OVER TO BANGLADESH SOME " HUNDREDS" OF POWS

FROM EAST PAKISTAN CIVIL ARMED FORCES WHO SURRENDERED
IN DECEMBER 1971. THESE PERSONS ENTITLED TO SAME
TREATMENT AS REGULAR PAKISTANI ARMED FORCES POWS, SATTAR
ASSERTED, AND GOP WAS IN PROCESS OF PROTESTING GOI
ACTION.

7. SATTAR FINESSED QUESTION OF WHETHER GOP WAS CONTEM-
PLATING ANY NEW PROPOSALS. HE DID INDICATE, HOWEVER,
THAT PAKS LOOKED WITH FAVOR ON IDEA OF IMMEDIATE
REPATRIATION BULK OF POWS AND BENGALEES, EVEN IF
SMALL NUMBER WERE HELD BACK FOR SUBSEQUENT LEGAL ACTION.
ASKED WHERE BIHARIS WOULD FIT IN THIS PICTURE, HE
REPLIED THAT THIS WAS SEPARATE ISSUE WHICH COULD BE
WORKED OUT CONCURRENTLY ALTHOUGH IT WOULD HAVE TO BE
DONE ON A " CASE- BY- CASE BASIS".

8. SATTAR CONFIRMED THAT IT WAS STILL PRESIDENT BHUTTO' S
INTENTION TO GO BEFORE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON JUNE 29
TO SEEK ENABLING RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING HIM TO EXTEND
RECOGNITION TO BANGLADESH AT APPROPRIATE TIME. SATTAR
DID NOT SPECIFY WHETHER AUTHORITY TO BE SOUGHT WOULD
BE CONDITIONED UPON ANY SPECIFIC BDG UNDERTAKING SUCH
AS DROPPING WAR CRIMES TRIALS.
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